

UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
Washington 25, D. C.

March 21, 1960

DEPARTMENTAL CIRCULAR NO. 1024, SUPPLEMENT NO. 7

TO HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND INDEPENDENT ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Federal Employees Health Benefits Program: Enrollment Periods
for Existing Plans Between Now and June 1, 1960

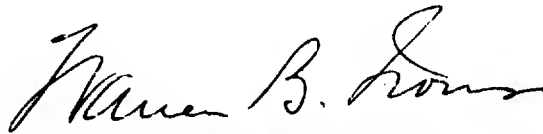
1. In Departmental Circular 1024, Supplement No. 3, the Commission requested agencies not to distribute to employees literature concerning any existing plans unless such literature had been approved by the Commission. It also asked that agencies not permit their facilities to be used in the publicizing of such existing plans.
2. The circular did not intend that this request apply to any literature which the agency would normally distribute for the plan, such as changes in benefits or in rates—provided such literature did not associate the existing plan with the Federal Employees Health Benefits program.
3. The purpose of this supplement is to repeat and emphasize the request made in supplement No. 3, and in addition to urge that agencies not permit the use of their facilities to disseminate any information concerning, or to allow, any open enrollment periods for any existing Federal group health benefits plans between now and June 1.
4. The Commission has wished to minimize disruption of the normal activities of existing plans during the next few months. We have recently learned, however, of a number of requests made to agency group collectors by existing plans for distribution of literature and other information which tied such plans directly into the Federal Employees Health Benefits program. Such literature has urged employees to join now, and has referred to alleged advantages to be gained under the Federal Employees Health Benefits program commencing in July by employees who do join now.
5. The Commission's responsibility under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Act is to furnish every eligible employee information concerning each plan available to him in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program which will enable him to make an informed choice. We believe that employees cannot make such a choice under the circumstances outlined in paragraph 4, and in advance of knowing what other plans will have to offer.
6. The time remaining between now and June 1, when enrollments under the Federal Employees Health Benefits program will begin, is so short that employees can lose little or nothing by having no open enrollment periods for existing plans until that date.

7. The requests made in paragraph 3 do not apply to the distribution of literature or other information concerning:

- changes in benefits
- changes in rates
- adjustments in subscription charges for less-than-one-month coverage in July

Even with respect to the above, however, the Commission asks that group collectors be instructed to clear literature with responsible agency officials before distributing it. In addition, agencies and installations are again requested not to accept "help" from a carrier's representative in explaining a plan or to permit a carrier's representative to contact groups of employees on agency premises for any purpose which directly or indirectly will permit or may be construed to permit solicitation for enrollment.

8. The Commission would appreciate it if agencies or installations would immediately inform the appropriate regional office of the Commission of attempts by any carrier to violate either the spirit or the letter of supplement No. 3 and this supplement. Carriers of plans being considered for participation in health benefits programs are being supplied with copies of both these supplements.



Warren B. Irons
Executive Director

Departmental Circular No. 1025, Supplement
6 was limited to the Washington D. C. area.